

INFORMATION LETTER

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NET WEIGHT STATEMENT ON LABEL MUST BE PLAIN AND CONSPICUOUS

The attention of the Association has recently been called to the provisions of the Food and Drugs Act which require that the statement on the label regarding net weight of contents be plain and conspicuous.

Presumably every canner is familiar with this section of the law, but it appears that some canned food labels, while complying with the letter, do not comply with the spirit of the law regarding the display of the net weight in a conspicuous manner.

A general notice has been issued by the Department of Agriculture, signed by W. G. Campbell, Director of Regulatory Work, as follows:

The Federal Food and Drugs Act defines food in package form as misbranded if the quantity of contents be not plainly and conspicuously marked on the outside of the package. Exemption from this provision is afforded only for extremely small packages.

Unquestionably, the purpose of the law is broader than simply to prohibit shortage in weight or measure; its intent is to insure to purchasers of packaged foods accurate information as to the amount in the package.

The Food and Drug Administration has observed a distinct trend in the food industries generally toward placing declaration of net weight and measure in very small type, or on non-contrasting backgrounds, or in obscure positions on the label. In some industries there is a tendency toward the adoption of forms of declaration with which the public is not familiar. If the public conception of quantity of a given commodity is in terms of gallons, quarts and pints, a declaration on the label of that commodity in terms of pounds and ounces does not convey adequate information.

Frequently it can be fairly inferred from an examination of the label that the manufacturer may have some reason for hesitating to tell the public how much of his commodity he is selling. This is particularly true where the amount is somewhat less than conventional units, as, for example, 14 ounces avoirdupois, or 15 fluid ounces.

Declarations of quantity of contents must be expressed in terms in which the public conceives of quantity of the particular commodity to which the declaration is applied. The declarations must be conspicuous; that is, they must appear in such position on the package and in type of such size, and on such background, as to insure observation. To guarantee this a declaration in type of adequate size, on a contrasting background, properly separated from other statements and designs, should appear on the display panel of the package. If more than one panel is used for display, the declaration should appear on each.

CALIFORNIA SECONDS ACT AMENDED

The governor of California has signed the bill which amends the California Seconds Act so that Seconds, Water and Pie fruit, as defined in the original law, can now be marketed within the state and in interstate commerce if labeled, "Below U. S. Standard—Low Quality but Not Illegal."

BULLETIN FURNISHES STANDARDS

With this issue of the Information Letters is mailed a copy of S. R. A., F. & D. 4, revised. This leaflet differs from the unrevised edition in that it also contains the standards for apricots, cherries and tomatoes. Additional copies can be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington.

INTENDED CABBAGE ACREAGE

Recent reports from the late cabbage states indicate that growers' acreage intentions for Danish-type cabbage this year have been changed but little from the reported plans earlier in the season. The Danish cabbage acreage for market is expected to be 39,070 acres, or 7 per cent greater than the acreage harvested last year. The total intended acreage of late cabbage grown for market, including domestic types, is 60,670, or 8 per cent more than a year ago.

Previous reports on the intentions to plan domestic-type cabbage in the late states, excluding that taken by kraut packers, indicated a 12 per cent increase for 1931. Kraut packers on the other hand indicated that their plans called for a 28 per cent decrease in acreage this year. Reports on the acreage planted to domestic-type cabbage for market and the acreage grown for kraut manufacture will be issued about July 10.

Since in several of the states there is no clear-cut distinction between the acreage grown for kraut and for shipment, it is impossible to judge exactly how much of the open-market or non-contract production may eventually be taken by packers. The kraut acreage and production estimates in advance of the packing season include a moderate allowance for possible takings of non-contract stock, in keeping with the usual practices in certain states. The market acreage is reduced by this amount, but at the end of the season it may be found that packers have taken more or less non-contract stock than was allowed for.

This year, packers have reported intentions to cut down on their requirements but growers have not made similar reductions in their plans. This, therefore, leaves a larger acreage for

market absorption unless packers should ultimately decide to take more stock than they now expect. This situation is especially true in New York and Wisconsin, the two leading late cabbage states, where the distribution of the proposed 1931 acreage compares with earlier years as follows:

	Harvested				1931 Intentions
	1927	1928	1929	1930	
New York:					
Market crop—					
Domestic	29,950	22,730	23,620	23,670	28,610
Danish	5,990	4,710	5,680	4,470	6,610
Kraut	23,960	18,020	17,940	19,200	22,000
Total	3,960	5,400	6,000	9,000	6,390
Total	33,910	28,130	29,620	32,670	35,000
Wisconsin:					
Market crop—					
Domestic	11,410	10,440	13,340	18,780	17,800
Danish	2,640	3,690	4,700	7,600	7,300
Kraut	8,770	6,750	8,640	11,180	10,500
Total	2,090	4,000	5,500	7,200	4,690
Total	13,500	14,440	18,840	25,980	22,490
Ten late states:					
Market crop—					
Domestic	51,830	43,540	48,940	50,020	60,670
Danish	14,300	14,050	16,350	19,370	21,600
Kraut	37,530	29,490	32,590	36,650	39,070
Total	12,820	17,290	20,610	27,470	19,800
Total	64,650	60,800	69,550	83,490	80,470

EMPLOYMENT IN MAY

Employment and pay-roll totals both decreased 0.9 per cent in May as compared with April, according to a report by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics based on returns from 46,031 establishments which in May had 4,721,032 employees whose combined earnings in one week were \$115,617,936. Increased employment was shown in only two of the 15 industrial groups. Decreased employment was shown in the remaining 13 groups, among them canning and preserving, which decreased 6.1 per cent.

FRUIT IN COLD STORAGE

Frozen and preserved fruits in cold storage on June 1 totaled 66,366,000 pounds as compared with 35,854,000 pounds on June 1 a year ago, and a five-year average of 36,187,000 pounds. Cold storage holdings of fruit are reported by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics as follows:

	June 1, 1931	June 1, 1930	5-year average
Apples:			
Barrels	38,000	96,000	155,000
Boxes	1,428,000	761,000	887,000
Baskets	192,000	309,000	215,000
Pears:			
Boxes	44,000	21,000	29,000
Baskets	1,000		6,000
Frozen and preserved fruit (pounds)	66,366,000	35,854,000	36,187,000

BUSINESS INDICATORS

(Weeks ended Saturday; weekly average 1923-1925 = 100)

	1931			1930		
	June 13	June 6	May 30	June 14	June 7	May 31
General business:*						
New York Times.....		75.3	76.7	92.1	93.1	93.7
Business week.....		78.5	78.0	89.5	91.3	93.0
Freight car loadings.....		79.4	74.2	96.6	97.6	89.7
Wholesale prices (Fisher's):						
All commodities.....	69.7	70.0	70.3	87.0	87.6	87.8
Agricultural products.....	60.4	60.4	60.3	90.0	91.2	91.6
Non-agricultural products.....	73.0	73.2	73.7	85.1	85.4	85.6
Bank debits outside New York City.....	89.2	101.3	89.8	114.9	107.9	113.1
Bond prices.....	105.8	105.1	106.3	106.4	106.4	106.4
Stock prices.....	130.8	123.8	126.0	216.1	230.0	234.1
Interest rates:						
Call money.....	36.4	36.4	36.4	68.6	72.7	72.7
Time money.....	34.3	35.2	40.0	85.7	85.7	88.6
Business failures.....	116.5	111.5	129.7	120.1	119.2	102.2

* Relative to a computed normal taken as 100.

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CAR LOADINGS

	Total	Miscellaneous	Merchandise	
			L. C. L.	Other
Week ended June 6.....	760,890	306,824	223,967	230,099
Preceding week.....	710,934	281,633	197,242	232,059
Corresponding week, 1930.....	935,582	369,316	243,753	322,513
Corresponding week, 1929.....	1,055,708	420,282	260,360	375,126

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL PRICES IN MAY

The index number of wholesale prices computed by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics shows a decline from 73.3 in April to 71.3 in May, a decrease of $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. The purchasing power of the 1926 dollar in May was \$1.403. Farm products as a group averaged $4\frac{1}{4}$ per cent below April prices. Among foods, further price decreases were reported for butter, cheese, fresh and cured meats, lard, dressed poultry, and sugar, resulting in a net decrease of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent for the group.

Retail food prices in 51 cities of the United States, as reported to the Bureau, showed an average decrease of a little less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on May 15 when compared with April 15, and an average decrease of about $1\frac{1}{3}$ per cent since May 15 a year ago. The prices of evaporated milk, canned pork and beans, canned peas, and canned tomatoes decreased 3 per cent, while canned corn decreased 2 per cent and canned red salmon decreased 1 per cent.

FARM PRICES

The general average of farm prices declined sharply during May, due largely to lower prices of cotton and livestock and livestock products. On May 15 the index of prices received by

farmers at 86 was 5 points lower than on April 15 and 38 points lower than on May 15 last year. Prices of farm products at the central markets continued to decline after May 15, and although there was some recovery in livestock prices during the first part of June, the average of prices received by farmers during June will probably be below that for May.

POULTRY USED IN CANNING

The quantity of poultry canned or used for canning by 35 firms reporting to the U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics in May, 1931, was 945,597 pounds. Thirty-two firms reporting for April, 1931, used 1,383,880 pounds. Thirty firms that reported using 840,769 pounds in May of this year, used 2,094,664 pounds in May a year ago. The U. S. Market News Service reports the quantity as follows, the figures for drawn poultry having been converted to an undrawn basis, assuming a 25 per cent shrinkage in drawing. The table shows a same-firm comparison for April and May:

	May, 1931	April, 1931	May	
	Pounds	Pounds	1931	1930
Dressed poultry canned or used in canning	630,041	1,118,003	619,451	1,007,626
Drawn poultry canned or used in canning	315,556	265,877	221,318	487,038
Total	945,597	1,383,880	840,769	2,094,664
Number of firms reporting	35	32	30	30

TRUCK CROP MARKETS

Total carlot movement of 38 important products increased further during the week ended June 13 to 21,665 cars, or 2,600 more than for the same period last year. Movement of new potatoes averaged fully 1,000 cars daily. Watermelons increased sharply to 1,740 cars for the week, while tomato shipments exceeded 1,850 and cantaloupes increased again to more than 2,100 cars, with heavy forwardings of similar melons during the week. *

Orange shipments from California increased to 1,285 cars, while Florida decreased to 300. Output of oranges was more than twice that of a year ago. Florida shipped only 170 carloads of grapefruit the past week, but California lemons jumped to 740 cars.

Pear shipments began in California with a dozen cars. The grape season also opened with 30 cars. California plums and prunes increased greatly to 615 cars, but cherry shipments

totaled only 115, even though the season had started in the Pacific Northwest. Forwardings of beans, celery and cucumbers registered a material decrease.

CARLOT SHIPMENTS

Commodity	June 7-13 1931	May 31- June 6 1931	June 8-14 1930	Total this season thru June 13	Total last season thru June 14	Total last season
Apples:						
1931 season	17	4	28	21	30	100,295
1930 season	227	336	176	109,295	102,549	102,801
Asparagus	31	46	34	3,650	2,701	2,789
Beans, snap and lima	417	782	670	7,285	7,762	9,559
Beets	28	79		1,467		
Blackberries, dewberries, loganberries	11	1		12		
Cabbage	580	646	620	18,238	15,493	38,306
Carrots	231	384	280	8,320	8,991	12,317
Cauliflower	7	1	9	8	9	9,587
Cherries	114	149	244	1,147	1,073	2,575
Corn, green	310	280		1,016		
Cucumbers	355	543	576	3,184	4,095	7,643
Mixed deciduous fruit	117	146	144	429	235	5,991
Mixed vegetables	551	579	592	17,526	17,722	31,043
Peaches	252	90	270	384	468	38,461
Pears:						
1931 season	13	1	0	14	2	28,846
1930 season	13	12	0	28,846	21,147	21,147
Peppers	121	50	90	1,917	1,598	2,794
Peas, green	131	299	53	4,619	3,640	6,800
Plums and prunes	620	364	500	1,310	908	8,712
Spinach	2	5	0	9,295	9,380	9,636
Strawberries	708	1,623	145	14,338	11,454	11,834
Tomatoes	1,865	1,247	2,362	10,843	14,350	33,506

WEATHER CONDITIONS

An outstanding feature of the weather for the week ended June 16 was the copious rain that fell at its close over the severely droughty areas of the Pacific Northwest, including the states of Washington and Oregon, according to the weekly report of the Weather Bureau. Rains were general over these states and extended southward into northern California. The moisture was of especial benefit to grain crops and pastures, though many grain fields were too far gone to be materially helped. Another favorable feature was the highly beneficial showers over many central-northern sections that were very dry, especially Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and limited portions of North Dakota. In these areas the rainfall was timely and very helpful to growing crops, particularly grains and pastures.

While the severely droughty area of the Northwest has been materially reduced, at least temporarily, considerable portions are yet largely unrelieved, especially western North

Dakota, much of Montana, and most of Idaho, with pastures drying up, stock water scarce, and some grain fields beyond recovery. There was also considerable drifting of soil in parts of North Dakota.

Soil moisture in the central valleys continues sufficient for present needs except in limited areas, mostly in parts of Kentucky, while the situation remains favorable rather generally in the Atlantic states from North Carolina northward.

In the South beneficial rains fell in many places, especially in Texas, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Georgia, but otherwise there is still need for moisture in many localities.

"AMERICAN CONTEMPORARIES"

In an article published in the June issue of "Industrial and Engineering Chemistry," an official publication of the American Chemical Society, W. D. Bigelow, Director of the Research Laboratories of the National Canners Association, is given his place among "American contemporaries," as a leader in his field of chemistry.

Before coming to the National Canners Association as chief chemist, and subsequently as director of its research laboratories, Dr. Bigelow was long associated with Dr. Harvey W. Wiley in the U. S. Bureau of Chemistry, and the article states that "the benefits which result from this interchange of governmental and industrial activities can find no better illustration than in the career of Willard Dell Bigelow.

"The scientific and administrative experience acquired in his 21 years of Bureau service enabled him to organize his new work with speed and effectiveness," the article goes on to say. "He collected about him a loyal band of co-workers who, under his direction, have made the laboratories of the National Canners Association one of the foremost institutions of the world in food research and technology. They have led the way in placing the canning of foods upon a thoroughly scientific basis."

Dr. Bigelow's many friends in the canning industry will be glad to learn of this honor conferred upon him.

CONCENTRATED MILK OUTPUT OF CANADA

During 1930 the 26 milk plants in operation in Canada had an output valued at \$13,604,743, according to the American commercial attache at Ottawa. Among the chief items of production were evaporated milk, \$4,983,943; condensed milk, \$2,390,206; skim milk powder, \$1,087,129.

CANNED FRUIT FACTORY ESTABLISHED AT COLOMBIA

The establishment of the canned fruit industry in Colombia on a moderate scale is indicated by the recent formation of La Companie Frutera de Santander, in the city of Bucaramanga. The total maximum daily production is given at 880 pounds, consisting principally of pineapples, with the expectation that other tropical fruits will be canned, according to the American trade commissioner at Bogota. At the start sales will be built up principally in the interior, and products from the factory are already being sold in Bogota at two-thirds of the price being received for the imported article.

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